

ATASCOSA COUNTY JUDGES REPORT

I write this column on election day, Tuesday, November 5, 2019.

This morning I started reading the headline on the San Antonio Express – News daily paper and it headlines – “New era for Bexar voters kicking off.” Although I do not need reassurance to know our county elections is on the right path it is comforting to know that our huge neighbor to the north is embarking on exactly the same paths as we are on for elections. They have the same equipment and, functionally, the same plan. This is our day to start “Countywide Voting.” Our polling stations on election day are turning into “Vote Centers” where any registered voter in Atascosa County can vote. It is a “new era” for Atascosa County also. No voter can go to the wrong polling place to vote again. Janice Ruple and her staff at Count Elections have done a fine job. One misunderstanding I am hearing is about the old manual ballot. The Secretary of State of Texas rules that to go to “Countywide Voting” we cannot use the old manual ballot system. This is because in “Countywide Voting” it is not possible to have every race represented on an individual paper ballot available at all “voting centers.” If you disagree or have suggestions please send them to the Texas Secretary of State for we have no say in this matter. Also, I think it makes sense. We are still using paper ballots, except now they are electronically printed.

I have one caveat to leave you with – no matter how good the voting systems are there will be mistakes. This is because they are set up and run by people. And we are all imperfect and make mistakes. For me, the important issue is that when we find the mistakes they are fixed quickly, and we move on. The vendor made a mistake on the set – up of our voting machines before early voting. It was fixed the same day we were notified. I also received a call from the CEO of the company assuring me that they were working on a software update that would make that impossible to ever happen again.

Quote, “Your only limitations are those you set up in your mind, or permit others to set up for you.” – Og Mandino

Thank you for listening. We want you to be proud of your county government.